241 tasks, and from this division of labor it is apparent – this will
462 be pursued further later on – that the work which requires the greater effort is allotted to the men, while the easier work is left to the women. Since by the very nature of the matter the harder work lasts for a shorter period of time, the impression easily arises that the women have to perform considerably more work than the men, but this is not the case, and it is probable that the distribution of work is not much different from that in Germany, say. It is just that the type of work is different. To be sure,
[982] upon seeing the large, fully packed baskets which the women bring in daily from the fields (Fig. 51), the uninitiated observer might easily get such an erroneous impression, but the carrying of such disproportionately heavy burdens, which makes the women's bodies so deformed, is partly their own fault. One is reminded of the Low German proverb: "De Fule drägt sich doht un de Flitige löpt sich doht /the lazy one carries himself to death, and the industrious one runs himself to death/. The woman likes to
[461] rest in the afternoon, and many of them even have quite an aversion for work. Incidentally, this is a further reason for the
[731] frequent periods of food shortage (mentioned in the third section /not translated/), which at times develop into real famines. /88/

241 The most important staple food plants of the Pangwe are the following seven:

Southern Region (Fang)	Northern Region (Jaunde)
1. Cassava (manioc)	1. Cassava (manioc)
2. Plantain	2. Groundnut
3. Groundnut	3. Plantain
4. Ngon	4. Maize
5. Maize	5. Ngon
6. Taro	6. Taro
7. Yams	7. Yams

It should be understood that the plants are listed here in the order of their importance as food plants, in other words, as "food" in the household, and not according to the extent of field work involved in their cultivation which would completely reverse the

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[161]

1. As an indication, the numerical strength of the Mekaé and Kozimé of the Cameroons may be put at about 80, 000 persons.

index is a little less than $\frac{1}{7}$ 1%), more, apparently, from a fall in the death rate than from a rise in the birth rate, which is rather inclined to decrease a bit. The table on pages 12a-12e gives a succinct survey in detail.

16 This table calls for some comments. First, the known rate of genital capacity*, nearly always around 4, like the sterility indices

/* According to another source, Georges Balandier /5/, "the genital capacity /is/ the mean number of pregnancies in women by the time of the menopause....." Sociologie Actuelle de l'Afrique Noire. Changemants sociaux au Gabon et au Congo /Contemporary Sociology of Black Africa: Social Changes in Gabon and the Congo/, p. 96, Paris, 1955. --Ed./

that reach 30 percent, forms a contrast to the accounts of the first explorers as well as to tribal traditions, which uniformly speak of high fertility and a large proportion of children. Even taking into account the undoubted exaggeration that colors these statements, it remains likely that a demographic decline took place in the second quarter of the twentieth century, offset by a lowering of mortality, at least in certain areas. The difficulties of adaptation to forest life are an explanation for the south. Undoubtedly, one must add factors like the spread of syphilis (kôto) along the highways and especially around settlements, and the outbreak of sleeping sickness, which seems to have followed pacification and to have affected particularly northern and northeastern Pahouin country. In the south there was also the great Gabon famine of 1924-27, as well as sociological causes such as heavy recruiting for the timber industry and perhaps psychological factors arising from the impact of colonization (Balandier). In the north where the precocious rise of an agricultural economy based on cacao stabilized the villages rather early, the change in the form of the bride price and the individual appropriation

764 commun/ were buried by their co-wives and the women of their affinal family. Bongô and bikellelé were buried at home with no other ceremonial than the mother's mourning.

765 766 767 When signs of sorcery were found on a corpse, the ngengan or mvimvi'i turned to divination to find the presumed culprit, who was subjected to an ordeal of bitter herbs. As a general thing, wives had 695 to submit regularly to the pimento or ant ordeals to make them confess not only the part they might have had in the husband's death but also their adulteries. When no one was found responsible for the death of a mie individual (nonsorcerer), it was decided that he had been the victim of a breaking of taboo, mem, sometimes unwittingly. Whatever the cause of death, sorcery or mem or repercussion from 767 an act of sorcery, purification always occured, generally by a sacrifice at the end of the mourning period (meyep). /103/

765 The duration of mourning was, and still is, a mbu /six months/, but it is now less rigorous. Formerly the wives of the dead man were secluded, naked, for a month in his hut, the first wife lying on his bed; their heads and all their body hair were shaved, and they were painted white with ash and forbidden to wash or do their hair until the end of mourning. The dead man's brothers and sons shaved their heads and let their beards grow without trimming or combing; their foreheads were painted white and they wore only old clothes. They had to observe a series of prohibitions concerning certain ways of hunting, the eating of certain kinds of game (perhaps the dead man's personal totem?), all journeys, the circumcision of the dead man's sons, the use of a bed, etc. The end of mourning was marked by a sacrifice and often by a melan ceremony in order to enter into communication with the dead man.

The strictest mourning was observed for the death of an esa, a man of the father's age grade, less for a monyañ, and hardly any for a mongô. With regard to women, a man observed solemn mourning only for his mother and first wife, and this meant mourning within the family, while a man's death involved the whole village. However, an epidemic was followed by heavy mourning, and when the one presumed responsible was identified, it was not enough that he 766 pay avutan, compensation, he was burned or drowned (his immediate 795 family was constrained to pay the avutan), and then a general 768 purification was undertaken.

754 777 akum • he has become rich by ngbwel), is to be distinguished from ordinary, accidental luck, ma'a, by its lasting character, which soon arouses public suspicion — this is one of the visible symptoms of ngbwel.

754 603 The involuntary nnem was generally put to death, more easily than the conscious sorcerer, who knew how to protect himself. Nevertheless, it was possible to treat a nnem, by means of a very drastic purification involving physiological as well as psychological catharsis and sometimes by real surgical operations /117/, to which in most cases the patient succumbed. Today the European administration usually prevents the execution of beyem, but their relatives often succeed in persuading them to kill themselves. After an epidemic of meningitis at Ambam in 1948, two men and two young women, accused by a bwiti diviner of having caused the death of a dozen children by involuntary ngbwel, threw themselves into the N'Tem within the month. In former times, beyem were burned by being covered with wood in such a way as to prevent both the évu and their nsisim from escaping; they were also drowned or buried alive, preferably in the bed of a stream that had been diverted and was then turned back to its old course after the burial.

754 The conscious nnem is both more and less dangerous. Bound to his évu by a kind of pact, he directs its activity instead of allowing it to kill at random as the unconscious nnem does. Therefore, he is more dangerous to his enemies but less so to his kin, although the concluding and maintenance of the alliance with the évu requires him to sacrifice members of his family.

A nnem with a strong personality, tyi anem a nlem ayat, with great strength and a hard heart, can succeed in really controlling his évu and making it a servant that will procure him wealth and power, rid him of his enemies, and confer supernatural powers on him, such as the ability to be in two places at once /bilocation/, to move objects from a distance /telekinesis/, divination, etc. But ngbwel always remains a dangerous art. First of all, the nnem knows that he is condemned after death to be a white kôn, forbidden to cross the évunga bekôn, the bridge of the dead, to seek the ancestors, mali ayat, beyond the sea. There are immediate dangers, in addition to that final condemnation. First, the ever present risk that the évu will dominate the nnem and weaken the latter. Next, the risk of a kind of reaction if the évu attacks a stronger nnem or a mie well protected by a bian provided with white magic. Finally, /there is the risk/ of